

# Kaharoa Kokako Trust

## April 2007, Newsletter

PO Box 78 NGONGOTAHA

Welcome to this newsletter with a summary of events and highlights for the past twelve months and information on what is planned for this year.

### **Adult Census:**

The census of adult kokako recently completed in the Kaharoa Conservation Area, covering approximately 700 ha. showed a substantial increase in numbers; a measure of the success of the pest control operations carried out thanks to the efforts of the Trust, our dedicated volunteers and our supporters.

In the whole Conservation Area managed by the Trust there are now 60 known breeding pairs, with a large number of juvenile birds yet to establish territories. This figure shows a substantial improvement on the 12 pairs struggling to survive in the forest when the Trust first began its activities ten years ago.

A total of 137 kokako were identified as territorial birds, 70 in the Aislabie Block, 25 in the Onaia West Block and 42 in the Onaia East Block. In some areas there are several pairs of kokako in a small proximity while other areas are sparsely populated.

Kokako numbers have increased in all areas and the census shows that we have succeeded in restoring a healthy, viable population. As the forest reaches near capacity in some areas kokako are now beginning to disperse into native bush on neighbouring properties.

This pleasing result is a credit to everyone who has helped in pest control, track clearing and other Trust activities over the years, and we thank you all. We also gratefully acknowledge the support we receive from the Department of Conservation, and Environment Bay of Plenty.

### **Trust Activities:**

When the Trust was formed 10 years ago with the stated aim "To ensure long-term protection and survival of kokako at Kaharoa". The results of our census shows we have been successful in meeting this ambitious goal. The challenge for the Trust is now to keep this excellent work going so we can support the spread of kokako into other areas.

The Trust members continue to meet on a regular basis and of late have put a lot of work into finalising the next 10 year plan to take the Trust into the future. Our aim has not changed, but it is timely for us to take stock and ensure we take the best possible direction – a direction that is both achievable and sustainable given that our organisation is primarily volunteer based. As a Trust we have been very fortunate in terms of both our funding sources and our volunteer support. We know that we cannot take our resources for granted and we must plan well in order to maintain our success.

### **Environment Bay of Plenty Environmental Awards 2006:**

The Trust was the proud winner of the Community Section of these Awards last year. Thank you to all the volunteers who have worked so hard to contribute to our success.

### **Rotorua District Council Community Award:**

Anne Managh has received a much deserved award in recognition of her services to the Trust and the Kaharoa community. This award follows recognition last year of our Trust founders, Peter Davey and Rachael Dixon-Davey. It is gratifying to see the tremendous voluntary effort of our Trust members acknowledged in this way.

### **Translocation of kokako to Mokoia Island:**

The attempt last year to transfer kokako to Mokoia Island was thwarted due to birds on Mokoia having some health problems. It is believed another attempt to translocate kokako is to be made this year, with birds from Kaharoa possibly being translocated next year.

### **Track Clearing - “Adopt a Track”:**

Last year saw the “Adopt a Track” scheme put into place by Graeme Young and his team. There were a large number of volunteers who took responsibility for a particular track, which they have maintained over the summer months. Together with a larger body of volunteer assistance at track working bees all tracks were in a much clearer and safer state for both the pest control programme and the Adult Census that followed. We thank you for your effort.

This year there will be a track maintenance programme undertaken. Dates are yet to be determined – but you will be notified.

### **2006 Pest Control Programme:**

Another thank you to all the volunteers who assisted with pest control last winter. We used Pindone Possum Pellets in bait stations over the whole forest area. The post pest control monitoring showed a reduction both possum and rats but not quite to the level we had hoped for. With advice and comment from those experienced in this field it appears that the bait station grid may not cover the area adequately to effect better control so that is an area the Trust needs to address.

This year there will be no pest control undertaken. After continuous pest control over many years bait shyness can become a problem and it is advised to spell areas for one or two years. The Trust has decided this is the year to take a break.

The regulations governing poisons are becoming more stringent all the time and the cost of the pest toxins is high. Many of the toxins that will be required to effect good results now, or soon will, require certified handlers for distribution. The Trust is discussing with the Dept of Conservation and the Kokako Recovery Group the possibility of training Trust members to be registered handlers. If this is not possible the Trust will have to rely on the Dept of Conservation to provide many more personnel to enable this programme to continue.

### **Funding & Thank You:**

Again this year the Environment BOP Environment Enhancement Fund has been our major funding source for which the Trust is extremely grateful. Without such solid support it would not have been possible to continue the work as we have done.

Our thanks too, to the Department of Conservation for the ongoing liaison and support to the Trust from its staff in Rotorua. Bruce Mossman who liaised with the Trust resigned last year and we welcome Peter Corson to work with us. Lakes Area Office manager Phil Alley is also retiring from his position mid year. Phil has always been a very good advocate and support for the Trust and we wish him well in his retirement.

While the Trust does receive funding from larger organisations, the “hands on help” and monetary donations from supporters are very important for the continued wellbeing of the Trust’s programme. Thank you to each and every one who continues to support the Trust in so many ways. It is truly appreciated.

Our grateful thanks also go to the Land-Rover Enthusiasts Club (Rotorua Region) who has generously supported us with the Landrover/Birdmobile. This vehicle has been used for publicity, during pest control operations, track maintenance, survey work, nest finding and for transportation of visitors into the Block.

### **Fenton Street Banner:**

Some of you may have noticed the Street banner opposite the Police Station depicts the kokako. This was prepared by Carmel Richardson and Dept of Conservation staff. Check it out next time you are in town.

### **Members/Volunteers Contacts:**

For many of you, the tried and true posted newsletter is the preferred way to receive updates. However, the Trust is aware there are many who are frequent users of email and this may be a more convenient way for us to ‘correspond’. **Your interest in the Kaharoa Kokako Trust is valued, and we would like to keep you informed of our activities in the way that best suits you!**

If you have an email address and you would be happy to receive communication electronically, please let us know. Send an email to our Trust Secretary Anne Managh at [manacre@clear.net.nz](mailto:manacre@clear.net.nz) including your name address and telephone number. We are looking to keep in regular touch with all our members and volunteers, so email can help to save on postage costs.